



**February 25, 2004**



## **Providence man pleads guilty to firearms offense**

**Ryan Cardente**, of Providence, has pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm, admitting that he had a pistol on him when Providence Police detectives confronted him last April.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentence, which Cardente entered yesterday before U.S. District Court Judge Mary M. Lisi in U.S. District Court, Providence. Cardente, 23, of 102 Ford Street, is detained pending sentencing, which is scheduled for May 3.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Zechariah Chafee said that, had the case gone to trial, the government would have proven that, on April 15, Providence detectives received information that two men, armed with a pistol and a shotgun, were in the vicinity of Ford Street. A short while later on Ford Street, detectives approached two individuals, one of whom was Cardente, and identified themselves as police officers. Cardente ran and tossed away a handgun but detectives apprehended him and retrieved the gun, a .380 caliber semi-automatic pistol with a round in the chamber but no ammunition clip.

Cardente has prior felony convictions for breaking and entering and conspiracy and, as a felon, is prohibited from possessing firearms. The statutory maximum penalty for being a felon in possession of a firearm is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.

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**Providence Police and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives**

investigated the case. The federal prosecution by Assistant U.S. Attorney Chafee resulted from a joint review of the case by the Rhode Island Attorney General's Office and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The joint review of gun cases is part of **Project Safe Neighborhoods**, a Department of Justice initiative against gun crimes. Under Project Safe Neighborhoods, the U.S. Attorney's Office, working with Providence Police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Attorney General's Office, and other agencies, aggressively prosecutes federal firearms offenses in an effort to incarcerate those responsible for gun violence and deter others from committing gun crimes. Since 2001, federal firearms prosecutions in Rhode Island have more than doubled and gun offenders have been sentenced to a total of more than 550 years in federal prison.

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